



# Indiana State Department of Health

## Epidemiology Resource Center

### Quick Facts

#### About...Yersiniosis

##### What is yersiniosis?

Yersiniosis (yer-sin-ee-OH-sis) is a disease caused by *Yersinia* bacteria, which live in animals and can be found in untreated water. Children are infected more often than adults.

##### What are the symptoms of yersiniosis?

- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea (often bloody)
- Vomiting

Symptoms can begin 4-7 days (up to 10 days) after exposure and may last 1-3 weeks. In older children and adults, pain in the lower right side and fever can be the main symptoms and may be mistaken for appendicitis. Some people may also have a sore throat.

##### How is yersiniosis spread?

*Yersinia* bacteria are spread in the stool of animals and humans, and people can become ill by eating or drinking food or water contaminated with *Yersinia*. The bacteria are also found in unpasteurized milk and raw or undercooked meat, particularly pork products. Yersiniosis is not usually spread from person to person, but it may be spread as a result of poor hand hygiene after using the restroom.

##### Who is at risk for getting yersiniosis?

Those who eat or do not clean-up well after handling raw or undercooked pork products are at risk for getting yersiniosis.

## **How do I know if I have yersiniosis?**

A person having diarrhea lasting more than 24 hours should consult a health care provider. The health care provider may collect a stool, blood, or urine sample to test for *Yersinia*.

## **How is yersiniosis treated?**

Most people get well within 5 to 7 days without medical treatment. A doctor may prescribe antibiotics for people with severe infection.

## **How is yersiniosis prevented?**

*Yersinia* infections can be prevented by following these guidelines:

- Wash hands with soap and water after using the restroom, after helping someone who has diarrhea and/or vomiting, after contact with animals, after swimming; before, during, and after food preparation, and after handling raw meat.
- Clean food preparation work surfaces, equipment, and utensils with soap and water before, during, and after food preparation, especially after contact with raw meat.
- Separate raw and cooked foods.
- Keep food at safe temperatures.
- Do not eat undercooked chitterlings or pork.
- Do not eat foods past the expiration date.
- Do not eat unpasteurized dairy products.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating them raw or cooking them.
- Use treated water for washing, cooking, and drinking.
- Wash hands after contact with livestock, petting zoos, pets, especially if they are suffering from diarrhea.
- Keep pets out of food-preparation areas.
- Do not clean pet cages in the kitchen sink or in the bathtub.
- Persons with diarrhea and/or vomiting should not prepare food or provide health care for others and should limit direct contact with others as much as possible.

All information presented is intended for public use. For more information, please refer to: <http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/yersinia/>

Food and Drug Administration, Food Facts for Consumers:  
<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm077286.htm>

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